

## CHAPTER NINE

### HOW THE MEDIA AFFECT INTERCULTURAL RELATIONSHIPS IN TIMES OF CHANGE

NICOLÁS LORITE GARCÍA

UNIVERSITAT AUTÒNOMA DE BARCELONA  
MIGRACOM<sup>1</sup>

#### 1. Introduction

The financial crisis has led to transformations in the media's treatment of certain social dynamics, especially since 2010. It is important to bear these in mind in order to better understand how the Spanish media address immigration, thereby stimulating intercultural encounters and ideologically positioning themselves to represent these new social collectives, which the media have referred to as "sin papeles" (undocumented), "residentes" (residents), "irregulares" (irregulars) and "ilegales" (illegals).

Demographic data, particularly migration flows (INE, 2012), help us to better understand the changing media treatment of social issues. The arrival of the crisis has brought immigration to Spain to a standstill, while the number of immigrants leaving the country has increased. Rising unemployment and the challenges of surviving in the "promised land" have led many immigrants who moved to Spain during years of economic prosperity to return to their countries of origin. At the same time, the country is witnessing a new cycle wherein Spaniards are immigrating to other European countries like Germany, harkening back to the migration of the sixties and seventies. However, there is a key difference between these two periods: the earlier cycle was quantitative, seeking large numbers of untrained workers (since manpower of any type was sufficient to fill lower-level positions), whereas the current cycle is qualitative, seeking specialized workers with a university education.

The constant changes in the media brought on by the crisis are also of key importance (FAPE, 2012). Media outlets are constantly restructuring,

merging and tightening their budgets; some have even closed up shop for good. Press, radio, and television – both state-run and regional outlets (which capture the attention of the most important audiences and consequently have the greatest impact on public opinion) – have significantly reduced staff, endeavoring to squeeze the same content out of employees who are working longer hours for lower pay – a key thrust of modern capitalism. Although it is difficult to obtain reliable data, it is thought that in Spain approximately 6,000 journalism jobs have been lost and 60 media outlets have closed since 2006, including excellent channels like *CNN+*. In addition to affecting the quality of news reporting, these decisions have shut down initiatives launched in moments of economic growth (and the increases in immigration which came with them). For example, we have lost journalists specializing in migration, who helped to provide more precise, factual information, thereby fostering a fair treatment of sociocultural diversity and avoiding discrimination in the form of racism and xenophobia.

These changes in how the media treat social issues in this time of crisis also impact regional media, particularly those local media outlets which are supported by public administrations (e.g. municipal press offices, municipal radio stations, local television channels, etc.). These microcontextual media were formed in the late '70s alongside the democratic government in Spain and have focused on stimulating positive relationships between people from diverse geographic, cultural and religious origins. Yet due to local budget cuts, they can no longer live up to their full possibilities.

However, new media and communication models have emerged alongside the crisis. These include internet-based options in the form of social networks like Facebook and Twitter, personal blogs and forums. As various types of media converge and new technological options like tablets and advances in cellular phones (which are constantly connected to the internet and feature "free" messaging services like WhatsApp) find success, they give rise to bidirectional, instantaneous ways of interacting with news. These innovations are seen as more decentralized and "democratic" than the traditional unidirectional model, yet are bound by the limitations of any new type of technology, which include the financial limitations of users and the ability of individuals to interact with them. Young people and teenagers are said to find them much easier to use. In fact, a hypothesis currently being considered suggests that these new communicative systems increase segregation and give rise to more multiculturalism than interculturalism, creating ghettos and having a racist and/or xenophobic impact rather than fostering respect for diversity. While



it is true that information spreads more quickly and users become content producers in modern media, this also leads to an exponential increase in clichés and stereotypes about “others” and their different social, cultural and religious identities.

In any case, general-interest media outlets – particularly those which are part of the largest multimedia corporations in Spain (*Prisa*, *Vocento*, *Recoletos*, *Godó* and *Mediapro*) – as well as the most important news agency in the country, EFE, continue to hold clear social power (which is linked to political and economic power). Indeed, this has always been the case with the classical one-way communication model, which sent news messages from producers to recipients without any form of feedback. Public opinion continues to be “guided” by the news and by specific cases which these large media corporations select and broadcast; content is chosen by their editorial departments and follows traditional news routines, aligning with their editorial policies and political and ideological approaches.

However, at the same time, the crisis continues to give rise to news stories featuring a two-fold (explicit and implicit) perspective on immigration and the intercultural relationships between immigrants and the local population. In other words, although each media outlet implicitly has its own way of portraying migration (which is related to its editorial policy, sometimes leading it to take an inclusive or marginalizing approach to migration), all media outlets explicitly seem to condemn violent, racist and xenophobic attitudes toward immigrants. The media also seem to coincide in adopting a pro-European or even Eurocentric approach (Lorite, 2010). In other words, the media explicitly condemn racist and xenophobic attitudes, but do so from a European viewpoint which defends the values of a European society (though this has recently been called into question as a somewhat muddled boundary of the common territory has been outlined), remaining fairly defensive about “us” versus the “other,” particularly in times of crisis.

## 2. Media expectations around multiple ethnicities: The case of Salt

All media – whether local or general, public or private – are waiting to see how coexistence between the native Catalan population (composed of Catalan-speaking, predominantly Catholic individuals born in Catalonia who follow regional traditions) and recent immigrants (who come from a variety of continents, cultures, languages and religions) pans out. As an example, they look (perhaps unconsciously) to towns like Salt, a

municipality in the traditional geographic center of Catalonia with a population of 30,000. Immigrants comprise 45% of the town’s population; the majority of these individuals arrived over the course of only seven years, between 2000 and 2007. Nevertheless, media coverage there has clearly chosen to focus on conflict rather than on normalization and integration. This is again in line with the maxim that “good news is no news” (Rodrigo, 2005), and is reflected in news reports about the town.

One story of conflict which received both national and international attention took place in January 2011. Mohamed Reda, a 16-year old boy, died when he fell from a roof after hiding from the local police who, according to Montse Barrera’s report in the Catalan newspaper *El Punt Avui* on January 15, 2011, “el perseguia pels carrers de Salt mentre conduïa un ciclomotor suposadament robat” (chased him through the streets of Salt while he was riding a moped alleged to be stolen). Before he died, “Una cinquantena de joves es van concentrar [...] davant de l’ajuntament i després es van dispersar pel municipi, on van cremar set contenidors” (some fifty young adults assembled [...] in front of the town hall and then scattered across the municipality, where they set fire to seven dumpsters). The article’s title, “Aldarulls a Salt en un acte de suport al lladre malferit” (Riots in Salt in support of badly wounded thief), took for granted that the individual in question was a thief (rather than an alleged thief) but did not include the fact that he was a Moroccan immigrant. However, *minutodigital.com* directly connected immigration to the crime; its January 17, 2011 headline stated, “Los inmigrantes de Salt continúan quemando coches” (Immigrants in Salt continue to burn cars) while the kicker, written in capital letters, proclaimed “INMIGRACIÓN Y DELINCUENCIA” (IMMIGRATION AND CRIME).

Another paper, *El Periódico de Catalunya*, pointed out an important component of the story, noting that “els joves estaven dirigits per persones majors d’edat, que els anaven dient com havien d’actuar en els actes de vandalisme [...]” (the young protesters were led by adults who told them how to conduct their acts of vandalism [...]). Through this chain of news, we can see that the conflict was started by xenophobic locals – some of whom were connected to the *Plataforma per Catalunya* political party (which the media regularly declares to be racist and xenophobic) – rather than the immigrants. The event grew in various ways and gained importance in politics, with Josep Antoni Duran i Lleida, the leader of *Unió Democràtica de Catalunya* (a center-right Catalan political party), stating that he “[...] culpa de los altercados de Salt al ‘exceso de extranjeros’” (blames the disputes in Salt on an ‘excess of foreigners’, *El Periódico de Catalunya*, 1/20/2011, p. 24).



The newsworthiness of a case like this cuts across various stages of the news, from the first shocking report to the conclusion of the story. Additionally, the initial portrayal has the greatest impact on public opinion, pointing out the differences between social "fronts" and giving rise to negative stereotypes about immigrants. Later pieces lessen the initial negative impact and may even turn it around into something positive. Nevertheless, the new, more factual, better-quality news tends to have a much smaller impact on recipients. The initial negative story complicates matters between people of different origins; positive stories which come out later struggle to repair these relationships.

This kind of treatment appears in similar cases which also attracted significant attention in the media (Lorite, 2010 and 2011), such as the 2008 death of Ousmane Kote, a Senegalese immigrant from a neighborhood in Roquetas de Mar called "Las 200 viviendas".<sup>2</sup> First the conflict broke out, and the public learned of the events through a hostile lens (in print, images, and audio clips). In this case, the media viewed quarrels and regular disputes between neighbors as a pitched battle. After the spectacle of this superficial yet shocking coverage, the media had time to delve into what actually happened and realized that early coverage had mislabeled some of the players in the story. For example, initial stories claimed that the possible assassin was a gypsy, although this was later found to be incorrect. However, although the media outlet made an effort to correct this mistake, it is unsurprising that this fell far short of the initial negative impact in the court of public opinion.

These "hostile" stories usually move on to a more in-depth explanation of the facts and end with the two "sides" – the natives and the immigrants – burying the hatchet, almost resembling a TV series. Along these lines, *El Mundo*, one of the most-read general-interest newspapers in Spain, summarized the profound causes of the conflict: "La alcaldesa culpa de los problemas a la pobreza y la falta de educación" (Mayor blames problems on poverty and lack of education), "La alcaldesa enmarca estos incidentes en el ámbito de la delincuencia y una juventud que 'ha perdido sus expectativas de futuro'" (Mayor frames these incidents in light of delinquency and youth who 'have lost expectations for the future'), and "El centro histórico son edificios hacinados, sin zonas verdes y sobreocupados" (The historic center is crowded with building after overpacked building, with no green areas). At the end of the news cycle, the paper also summed up the reconciliation between the "sides" under the headline "Inmigrantes, regidores y otros vecinos marchan juntos hoy por la convivencia" (Today immigrants, councilmen, and other residents march

together for coexistence; *El Mundo.es Barcelona*, Eva Belmonte, 1/22/2011).

Even after reaching a point of reconciliation in such battles, the media expectantly await new "hostile" conflicts. They cannot seem to understand that a conflict in these urban contexts, the sites of recent cultural and ethnic diversity, could end there. In the case of the death of Mohamed Reda, a few days after "brokering a peace" in Salt, *Minutodigital.com* used another crime to proclaim "Sigue la batalla en Salt: detienen a un colombiano que asesinó a un joven de un golpe en la cabeza" (Battle continues in Salt: Colombian who murdered a young man with a blow to the head arrested; *Minutodigital.com*, 1/31/2011), with "INMIGRACIÓN" (IMMIGRATION) as their generic sub-header. They continued using a hostile tone, employing the word "battle," when they learned that "Los Mossos d'Esquadra han detenido a Anderson Jair S. P., de 23 años y origen colombiano, acusado de matar a Óscar Cruz, de 22 [...]" (the *Mossos d'Esquadra* [Catalan regional police force] arrested a Colombian man, Anderson Jair S.P., 23, accused of murdering Óscar Cruz, 22 [...]).

*TotSalt.cat*, a news outlet in the town, also used the word "battle" when discussing an incident which took place at a soccer game in Salt in June of that year: "Un partit de futbol acaba en batalla campal al Camp Municipal de les Guixeres" (Soccer game ends in pitched battle at the Camp Municipal de les Guixeres; *TotSalt.cat*, 6/21/2011). In this case, the news focused on a clash not between locals and immigrants but between immigrants themselves. The tournament is organized each year by a group referred to as "FIFA," the popular name:

"[...] amb el que es coneix a l'associació senegalesa de Salt que organitza aquest torneig "Copa Àfrica" des de fa uns anys. Hi participen un total de 16 clubs de tota la demarcació de Girona. Segons un dels responsables de l'organització aquest torneig pretén fomentar l'esport i la convivència entre els diferents membres de les comunitats africanes, però ha reconegut que moltes vegades la situació se'ls escapa de les mans, ja que a mesura que els partits comencen a ser decisius les eliminatòries es van escalfant, la tensió augmenta i el nombre d'espectadors es desborda sense que ells hi pugin fer res."

("[...] used to refer to the Senegalese association of Salt, which has been organizing the "Africa's Cup" for several years. Sixteen teams from all across Girona participate in the tournament. According to one of the association's coordinators, this tournament aims to encourage sports and coexistence among members of the different African communities. However, the organizer noted that the situation often gets out of control during the eliminatory rounds of the tournament, as things heat up,



tensions increase, and the number of spectators gets out of hand to the point that FIFA cannot do anything about it").

In addition to neighborly conflicts and "battles" of one kind or another, Salt has also made the news due to topics which become newsworthy because of their conflictive nature. For example, consider the complicated story of mosques in Salt and the political decisions about them. As the editorial in *El Periódico de Catalunya* noted on August 25, 2011:

"[...] Salt vuelve a ser protagonista por decisiones relacionadas con la inmigración. En este caso, la suspensión durante un año de la concesión de licencias para centros de culto en el polígono de Torremirona, lo que en la práctica equivale a prohibir la apertura de más mezquitas. La aprobación del veto, una iniciativa del alcalde Jaume Torramadé, fue posible por los votos de CiU, el PP y dos de los tres ediles elegidos en la lista de la Plataforma per Catalunya (PxC), que ya han abandonado la disciplina del grupo xenófobo tras el tardío descubrimiento del auténtico cariz de Josep Anglada, que les reconvino por aspectos de su vida privada: una concejala tiene un novio camerunés y otro edil no oculta su relación con un dominicano [...]. La crisis ha aumentado los problemas en zonas de gran concentración de inmigración como Salt. Y los ayuntamientos, con la economía en precario, no disponen de los recursos necesarios para planes que mejoren objetivamente la situación. Pero a lo que no pueden renunciar es a actuar con inteligencia y serenidad en pro de la convivencia. Habrá que ver si la prohibición de nuevas mezquitas en Salt conduce a ese objetivo o, por el contrario, es fuente de nuevos conflictos." (*El Periódico de Catalunya*, 25/08/2011).

"[...] Salt again has taken center stage because of decisions related to immigration. In this case, they have put a one-year hold on granting licenses for places of worship in the Torremirona development, in effect blocking further mosques from opening. The prohibition, spearheaded by mayor Jaume Torramadé, was possible due to votes from CiU, PP, and two of the three *Plataforma per Catalunya's* council members, who left the xenophobic party after belatedly discovering the true nature of Josep Anglada, who chided them for aspects of their personal lives: one council member has a boyfriend from Cameroon, while another has not hidden his relationship with a Dominican [...] The crisis has escalated problems in areas with highly concentrated numbers of immigrants like Salt. And given the precarious nature of the economy, town councils lack the resources they would need to create plans to improve the situation. But what they cannot do is stop acting intelligently and calmly in favor of coexistence. It remains to be seen if this prohibition on new mosques in Salt achieves its goals, or conversely, if it is the source of new conflicts).

The challenging cultural and ethnic relationships had already been labeled as "hostile" when the first major conflict broke out in Salt in 2009. At the time, the Catalan public station, *Televisió de Catalunya (TV3)*, used the following headline in its evening news: "Batalla campal entre comunitats a Salt" (Pitched battle between communities in Salt; *Telenotícies vespre*; 8/26/2009). The story argued that the "hostile" confrontation was due to the fact that the town could see "[...] petits furtis d'un grup de menors magrebins a diversos comerços de Salt regentats per pakistanesos" ([...] small incidents of theft among a group of underage Moroccans in several shops run by Pakistanis in Salt).

That day, another station, 324, used the word "baralla" (quarrel, fight) instead of "batalla" (battle), running a story about a "baralla multitudinària entre ciutadans pakistanesos i marroquins" (massive fight between Pakistani and Moroccan citizens). Like TV3, the channel – which aims to provide relevant news to the public 24 hours a day – is part of the *Corporació Catalana de Mitjans Audiovisuals* (Catalan Broadcasting Corporation). The story went on to note:

"Una baralla multitudinària a Salt, al Gironès, entre un grup de ciutadans pakistanesos i un altre de marroquins va provocar dilluns dos ferits lleus i va haver d'intervenir-hi diverses dotacions dels Mossos d'Esquadra i de la policia local [...]. L'incident va tenir l'origen en el robatori d'una bossa de patates que va fer un menor magrebí en una botiga regentada per ciutadans pakistanesos [...]. Aquesta és la primera vegada que hi ha un conflicte entre comunitats a Salt i segons l'alcaldesa en funcions del municipi, no hi ha constància que hi hagi problemes habituals entre ciutadans pakistanesos i magrebins."

("On Monday, a massive fight between a group of Pakistani citizens and a group of Moroccans in Salt, a town in the county of Gironès, led to two minor injuries. Several teams from the *Mossos d'Esquadra* (Catalan regional police) and local police had to intervene in the fight [...]. The incident started when a Moroccan boy stole a bag of potatoes from a store run by Pakistani citizens [...]. This is the first time such a conflict has taken place between different ethnic communities in Salt. According to the municipality's acting mayor, there is no evidence of regular problems between Pakistani and Moroccan citizens in the town").

The language used to refer to the two groups is particularly interesting. The Pakistanis are referred to as citizens from the very start, whereas the Moroccans are not called citizens until the end of the piece, when both groups are described using this word. If these groups are viewed as citizens, is it appropriate to continue to use this label? Doing so is



inclusive (considering a person to be a citizen), yet at the same time, it is discriminatory (creating distance and segregating these groups). From a production standpoint and given the restrictions of production routines, this can be explained in light of the need to provide the maximum amount of detail about the individuals featured in the story. Nevertheless, the bodies which oversee the quality of reporting on immigration often criticize the media for not using the same term when referring to Catalan or Spanish citizens.

Cordinach's (2012) analysis of the coverage of this 2009 "battle" on channels with differing content, audiences, and approaches – including *TV de Girona* (a local station), *TV3* (the regional, Catalan station), and *TVE* (a public, state-run station) – reveals that all three channels used a favorable tone in the first few days of their coverage of the confrontation between cultures. *TV Girona* spent more time on the story than the other two channels (11.2% of the news for *TV Girona* vs. 3.1% for *TV3* and 2.2% for *TVE*). With regard to their sources, all three channels included non-immigrants more than immigrants; immigrants spoke for only 30% of the total time that interviews lasted. It should be noted that *TV Girona* often does not identify its sources (47.1% of speakers were not identified), which probably is a result of the local channel's limited technical and human resources (a fact that was verified in our study of their production of the news). *TV3* identifies the majority of its sources, archive footage, and publications, which stems from the fact that *TV3* can put more resources to work in identifying these and respecting diversity.

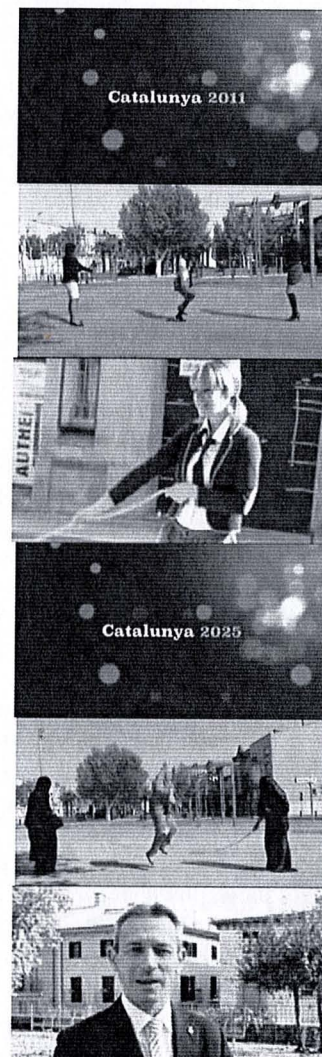
### 3. Politics and sports

During the crisis of the year 2011, three elections occurred: municipal and regional elections took place on May 22 while national elections were held on November 20. These elections shed light on trends in the political discourse on immigration. Regardless of their editorial policy, all media outlets seemed to oppose the racist and xenophobic videos used by the *Partido Popular* (the right-leaning 'Popular Party') and *Plataforma per Catalunya* (PxC; the far-right, racist and xenophobic 'Platform for Catalonia,' which resembles Le Pen's 'National Front' in France).

The PxC video used in the municipal elections features three girls with European-looking traits that resemble those of the native Catalan population (at the very least, it is clear that they are not African, Latin American, or Asian). The girls are jumping rope in a street; the image is labeled "Igualada, 2011." Then the clip cuts to a similar scene many years

later, in 2025, which features three jump-roping girls dressed in burkas (see Table 9-1).

Table 9-1. Igualada 2011



AUDIO:

Traditional song in Catalan:  
"Passant per la Font del  
Gat" (Walking in front of  
the Cat Fountain).

Girl with European-looking  
traits which visibly  
resemble those of the native  
Catalan population

Song in Arabic

Josep Anglada (in Catalan):  
"Primer els de casa. Vota  
Plataforma per Catalunya"  
("Take care of our own  
first", literally "First the  
people from here"). Vote for  
*Plataforma per Catalunya*."

Source: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w7xY7STPMXc>



Moreover, in PxC's video for the general elections:

"Se ve a dos mujeres en dos lados opuestos de una mesa, una de ellas con un hiyab. Poco a poco van entrando diferentes hombres que le van quitando a una de ellas, de forma metafórica, la sanidad, la educación, la comida y, finalmente, la ropa —se queda en ropa interior—, para dárselo todo a la chica que representa la inmigración. Todo ello acompañado de la banda sonora original de la película 'Lo que el viento se llevó'".

("We see two women, one of whom is wearing a hijab, sitting at opposite sides of a table. Slowly but surely, various men enter the scene, metaphorically taking away health, education, food, and finally clothing (the woman is left wearing only undergarments) from the first and giving all of these things to the girl who represents immigration. All of this is set to the tune of the original soundtrack from *Gone with the Wind*"). (*Público.es*, 11/18/2011).

The ad ends with the slogan "Primer els de casa" ("Take care of our own first", literally "First the people from here").

The conservative Catalan nationalist party, *Convergència i Unió* ("Convergence and Union"; CiU) also uses linguistic wordplay with the media to hide its xenophobic tendencies. For example, the candidate heading up the list for Barcelona, Josep Antoni Duran, said to be a "brilliant" orator, constantly justifies the poster which features his photograph and the slogan "La gent no se'n va del seu país per ganes sinó per gana. Però a Catalunya no hi cap tothom" (People leave their country not because they want to [*per ganes*] but because they are hungry [*per gana*]). But Catalonia doesn't have space for everyone).

The media have also been keeping track of some of the phrases Duran has used at political rallies, including "En España hay más inmigración de la que debería haber" (Spain has more immigration than it should), "la presencia de inmigrantes en un barrio es la causa del descenso del valor de los pisos" (Immigrants in a neighborhood lead to decreases in home values) and "los niños extranjeros son los responsables del retraso del rendimiento escolar" (Foreign students slow down academic progress). These types of political opinions are broadcast by all of the media. Although they are relativized by some people on the right, they are quickly counteracted by the opinions of certain social bodies and organizations. However, these belated corrections of errors committed when reporting on the "battles" continue to reappear in xenophobic statements from the candidates. Duran's quotations, rather than the complaints of anti-racist organizations, are seared into our minds when later manifestoes are

published. Along these lines, *Público*, a leftward-leaning paper that went under during the crisis, stated that:

"El discurso racista y xenófobo [de Duran i Lleida] tiene nefastas consecuencias en la convivencia y nos pone en peligro de fractura social", afirmaron en un comunicado SOS Racisme-Catalunya, CCOO de Catalunya, UGT de Catalunya y la Confederación de Asociaciones de Vecinos y Vecinas de Catalunya. Estas entidades sociales, vecinales y sindicales denuncian en el documento, titulado Basta al discurso político xenófobo y racista, "la falta de responsabilidad política y social del señor Duran i Lleida, que se aprovecha de un contexto difícil para culpar a personas de origen inmigrante de problemas transversales de la sociedad, como son la falta de inversión pública en educación o la situación de crisis en el mercado inmobiliario".

("The racist and xenophobic discourse [utilized by Duran i Lleida] has disastrous implications for coexistence and runs the risk of creating social divisions," noted *SOS Racisme-Catalunya* [S.O.S. Racism - Catalonia], *UGT de Catalunya* [the General Workers' Union of Catalonia], and the *Confederación de Asociaciones de Vecinos y Vecinas de Catalunya* [Confederation of Residents' Associations of Catalonia] in a press release. In a document entitled *Basta al discurso político xenófobo y racista* [Enough xenophobic and racist political discourse], these social organizations, neighborhood groups, and unions denounced "Mr. Duran i Lleida's lack of political and social responsibility, which takes advantage of a difficult situation to blame people with foreign origins for cross-cutting societal problems such as the lack of government investment in education or the crisis in the housing market"). (*Público*, 10/5/2011, <http://medios.mugak.eu/noticias/noticia/292465>)

Some of these organizations, like *SOS Racisme*, tried to get a jump start on this kind of xenophobic discourse; before the election, the group published its *Manifiesto contra el uso demagógico y populista de la inmigración ante las próximas elecciones municipales* (Manifesto against the demagogic and populist use of immigration leading into the upcoming municipal elections), which underscored the need to pay careful attention to the discourse of hatred towards immigration. Like always, however, proposals to write positive stories based on factual research weren't news. Although these organizations work to prevent negative stories, they impact society far less than Duran's political rhetoric does.

A noteworthy phenomenon in 2011 concerned racist behavior in the sport of soccer. Sports journalists play a key role in fighting this kind of behavior from fans and players alike. However, due to the sensationalist and rather unilateral nature of this kind of news, reporters sometimes end



up promoting such conduct. This happens when they speak out against calling Brazilian or African players “monkeys” or protest players who have used this expression to mock others. (In April and May, the media focused heavily on how FC Barcelona’s trainer, Carlos Busquets, had used this expression to refer to Real Madrid’s Marcelo Vieira da Silva.) However, the papers in Madrid (*As* and *Marca*) will always take a different view of this issue than their Catalan counterparts (*Sport* and *Mundo Deportivo*). Although these sources give different readings to the issue, each of them is both for and against racism, encouraging integration and respect for diversity while simultaneously creating conditions which underscore differences.

#### 4. Quantitative data

Quantitative data highlights the true impact of the media on intercultural relationships (Lorite, 2004, 2010 and 2011). A first crucial piece of quantitative data is the presence of migration in the news, namely the percentage of time that focuses on migration (especially the arrival, settling in, and integration of immigrants) in those news broadcasts which have the largest share of the TV audience and social impact in Spain (MIGRACOM, 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009). State-run television programs saw a considerable increase in the share of news focused on immigration between 1996 and 2006, a period which corresponded to significant immigration to Spain. In the TV news programs we analyzed, *Antena 3* (A3), *Tele 5* (Tele5), and *Televisión Española: La1* (TVE), only 0.8%, 0.6%, and 0.5%, respectively, of programming focused on immigration in 1996. However, ten years later, in 2006, this rose to nearly 10% (8.8% for A3, 9.2% for Tele5, and 9.6% for RVE). In other words, almost one of every ten minutes of the TV news addressed issues of immigration. Starting in 2007, these percentages dropped considerably, stabilizing between 3% and 5%, as depicted in Figure 9-1.

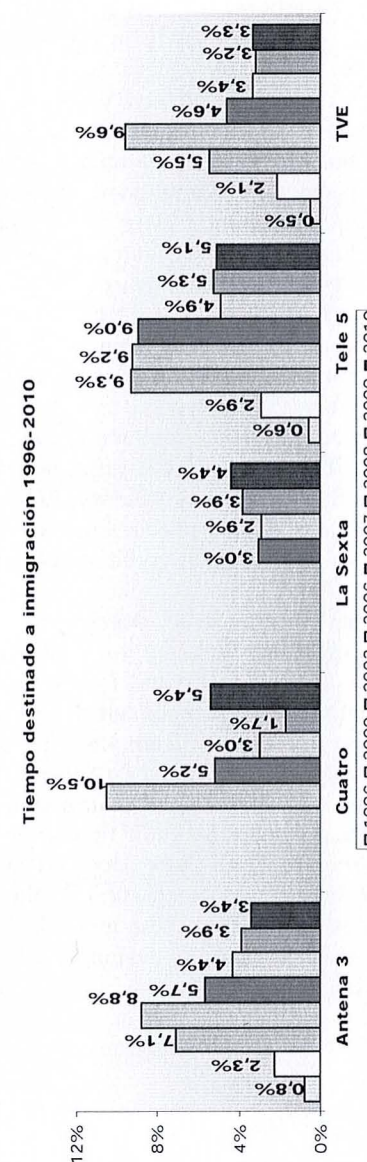


Figure 9-1. Time spent on immigration, 1996-2010.  
Source: MIGRACOM: [www.migracom.com](http://www.migracom.com)

The same trend can be seen in the local TV news broadcasts in each of the autonomous regions of Spain – namely in Catalonia (TV3), Madrid (Telemadrid), Valencia (Canal 9), Andalusia (Canal Sur), the Basque Country (ETB-2) and Galicia (TVG) – although these spend somewhat less time on immigration. However, these channels do not all focus equally on the subject; a larger or smaller presence of reports on migration in the news is correlated to the percentage of immigrants living in each region in the given period. In addition to being regions where immigrants tend to settle, Madrid, Valencia, Andalusia and Catalonia gave particular weight to immigration in 2006 due to the “llegada masiva de cayucos” (widespread arrival of “cayucos,” a kind of fishing boat from Senegal which can hold up to 50 passengers). However, the share of the news focused on migration almost completely evaporated in 2009 and 2010 with the growth of the financial crisis and halt in migration flows.

To shed light on the processes of intercultural encounters on TV news, a second important piece of data entails analyzing newsworthy topics in the field of migration. In this vein, a key year was 2008, when the crisis began and the first symptoms of this phenomenon could be seen. That year, TV focused on three macro-topics: politics, conflicts and arrivals (MIGRACOM, 2008).

However, as the crisis continued to develop in 2009 and 2010, programs spent less time on content relating immigration to criminal acts and social violence than in previous years. Furthermore, in a marked increase from the year before, 2010 saw the number of reports related to racism and xenophobia rise significantly, from 3.8% (the average value for evening news on *TVE*, *Tele5*, *A3*, *Cuatro* and *La Sexta*) in 2009 to 9.7% in 2010. The biggest increase was seen on the *Cuatro* channel, which went from not touching on these topics in 2007 to spending 15.9% of its programming on immigration in 2010. The most significant change was in content related to different aspects of integration. While the state-owned news channels spent almost no time on these topics beforehand, in 2010 this trend was reversed, with 15.6% of the evening news on the five state-run channels focused on immigration.

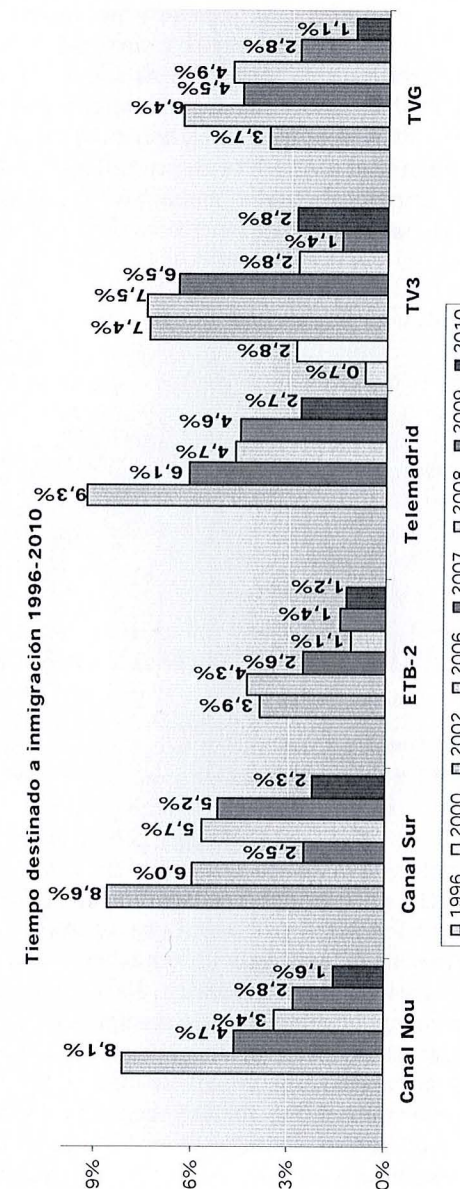


Figure 9-2. Time spent on immigration, 1996-2010.  
Source: MIGRACOM: [www.migracom.com](http://www.migracom.com)



Another topic, the arrival of the *sin papeles* (undocumented) in boats called *pateras* or *cayucos* has played a key role since the 1990s. With the crisis, the media's interest in these kind of news stories (most of which were dramatic) logically fell as the number of immigrants who arrived decreased. Interestingly, this topic went from being the number one issue in 2007 to almost insignificant in 2010, as shown in Figure 9-3. However, interest in depicting the drama of arriving in the "promised land" is related to the type of news program and the channel's desire to capture audiences thirsty for morbid stories.

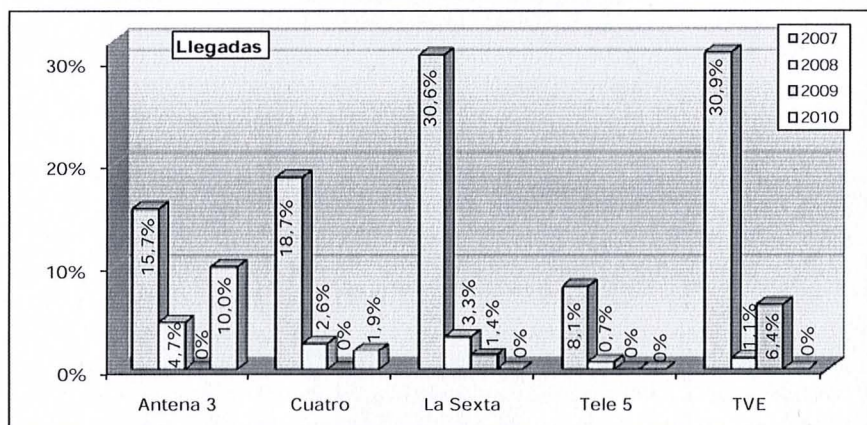


Figure 9-3. The arrivals of undocumented people.

Source: MIGRACOM: [www.migracom.com](http://www.migracom.com)

## 5. Conclusions

In order to objectively analyze the media's impact on intercultural relationships in times of crisis – particularly in countries which have recently seen large amounts of immigration from other regions, like Spain – four different types of data are necessary. First, demographic data provides key information on ongoing changes in migratory flows. Second, one must consider information on mergers and closures of media outlets – both general and local media, especially with regard to those groups which rely on the government for funding and aim to promote the integration of minority groups through media. Third, an up-to-date knowledge of emerging types of communication and social news channels like the internet (often accessed through mobile technology and tablets) demonstrates how news has become more interactive, simultaneously fostering both racism and anti-racism. Finally, one must analyze the

media's two-pronged approach to immigration – which is explicitly anti-racist yet implicitly takes a Eurocentric view that tends to be xenophobic and reject "the other" – from multiple perspectives.

Case studies also provide objective data on the treatment of immigration. A relevant case study revolves around the ethnically diverse city of Salt, in Catalonia. The media are interested in the relationships between the native Catalan population (composed of Catalan-speaking, predominantly Catholic individuals born in Catalonia and following the traditions of this region) and recent immigrants (who come from a variety of continents, cultures, languages and religions). Media coverage of their interactions in 2011 frequently was slanted more towards social conflict (frequently referred to as "battles") than normal daily life. Interestingly, stories often portrayed conflicts ending in a peaceful resolution. Good news stemmed from bad news, yet the initial negative coverage had a much more significant social impact.

Third, it is important to pay special attention to how the media treat immigration during certain political activities (municipal elections) and sporting activities (soccer games). For example, in the municipal, regional, and general elections which took place in Spain in 2011, all media outlets, regardless of their editorial policies, opposed the racist and xenophobic videos used by the *Plataforma per Catalunya* (the far-right, racist and xenophobic 'Platform for Catalonia,' which resembles Le Pen's 'National Front' in France).

Fourth, this type of research must include quantitative, longitudinal data from observatories like MIGRACOM<sup>1</sup> on how state and regional television channels discuss immigration (and immigration-related topics). The data presented in this chapter demonstrate a significant increase in news coverage of immigration between 1996 and 2006. In fact, one of every ten minutes of the news focused on immigration in 2006. However, starting in 2007 this coverage decreased significantly, stabilizing between 3% and 5%. Consequently, the social impact of stories about migration and integration provided by these channels is but a small fraction of all news.

Finally, in times of crisis it is necessary to put a special emphasis on current recommendations for adequately treating diversity, such as those designed by the Catalan Broadcasting Council's (*Consell d'Audiovisual de Catalunya*, 2003) Round Table on Diversity and the Association of Journalists of Catalonia (*Col·legi de Periodistes de Catalunya*). We must continue to follow the lead of MIGRACOM, studying these processes using applied action research grounded in multi-modal methodology (which investigates the production, broadcasting and reception of



messages) and adopting a qualitative and quantitative approach based on objective examples and case studies. This research aims to acquire unbiased, generalizable data and suggest the most appropriate discourses (in print, spoken, and audiovisual media) in order to encourage respect for cultural diversity and avoid racism and xenophobia in Spain.

The Government of Catalonia's first such study took place in 1996 and was conducted in collaboration with the professional association of Catalan journalists (the *Col·legi de Periodistes de Catalunya*) as well as other civil society organizations. Study results led to the *Manual de Estilo sobre Inmigración y Minorías Étnicas de España* (Style Guide on Immigration and Ethnic Minorities in Spain), a first in Spain and one of the earliest such manuals in Europe. In the 2000s, MIGRACOM carried out further studies on the *Tratamiento Informativo de la Inmigración en España* (Media Treatment of Immigration in Spain) for the Ministry of Labour and Immigration's General Directorate for the Integration of Immigrants and the Spanish Observatory on Racism and Xenophobia (OBERAXE). Such results have allowed us to push for quality treatment of diversity, supporting initiatives like the *Guía Práctica para los Profesionales de los Medios de Comunicación. Tratamiento Mediático de la Inmigración* (Practical Guide for Media Professionals: Media Treatment of Immigration; Sendín, 2008).

### Notes

1. MIGRACOM is the Migration and Communication Observatory and Consolidated Research Group (2009 SGR675) at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. [www.migracom.com](http://www.migracom.com)
2. In English, the name of the neighborhood "Las 200 viviendas" means "200 homes."

### Bibliography

- Barrera, Montse "Aldarulls a Salt en un acte de suport al lladre malferit". *El Punt Avui*, 15 January 2011. <http://www.elpuntavui.cat/salt/mes/2-societat.html?start=400> Last accessed on 31 March 2012.
- Belmonte, Eva. "Inmigrantes, regidores y otros vecinos marchan juntos hoy por la convivencia". *El Mundo.es Barcelona*, 22 January 2011. <http://www.elmundo.es/elmundo/2011/01/21/barcelona/1295624795.html>. Last accessed on 24 January 2012.
- CAC. Mesa per la Diversitat a l'Audiovisual. 2002. *Manual sobre el Tratamiento de la inmigración en los medios de comunicación*, Barcelona: Consell de l'Audiovisual de Catalunya.

- <http://www.audiovisualcat.net/home/investigacion/inmigracion.pdf>  
Last accessed on 31 March 2012.
- Cogo, Denise and Nicolás Lorite García (coords.). 2005. *Mídia, migrações e interculturalidades*. Rio de Janeiro: Logos, UERJ.
- Colegio de Periodistas de Cataluña. 1996. *Manual de Estilo sobre Minorías Étnicas*.  
<http://www.aulaintercultural.org/IMG/pdf/manualdeestilo.pdf>  
Last accessed on 31 March 2012.
- Cordinach Fossas, Mariona. 2012. "El tractament informatiu de la immigració magrebí a les televisions catalanes". Paper presented at III Congreso Internacional de la Asociación Española de Investigación de la Comunicación- Tarragona, 18,19 and 20 January 2012.
- Cardenosa, Nicanor J. "Redes sociales: España a la cabeza mundial". *El Mundo*, 5 January 2012.  
[http://www.elmundo.es/yodona/blogs/yd\\_t/2012/01/05/redes-sociales-espana-a-la-cabeza.html](http://www.elmundo.es/yodona/blogs/yd_t/2012/01/05/redes-sociales-espana-a-la-cabeza.html) Last accessed on 31 March 2012.
- El Periódico de Catalunya*. Salt, de nuevo". Editorial. 25 August 2011.  
<http://www.elperiodico.com/es/noticias/opinion/salt-nuevo-1128611>  
Last accessed on 31 March 2012.
- FAPE. 2012. Federación de Asociaciones de Periodistas de España.
- Instituto Nacional de Estadística (INE). 2012. Flujos migratorios estimados. Migraciones exteriores. Serie 2010-2011.  
<http://www.ine.es/jaxi/menu.do?type=pcaxis&path=%2Ft20%2Fp259%2Fe01&file=pcaxis&L> Last accessed on 31 March 2012.
- Lorite García, Nicolás (dir). 2004. *Tratamiento informativo de la inmigración en España 2002*. Madrid: Instituto de Migraciones y Servicios Sociales.
- . 2010. "Televisión informativa y modelos de dinamización intercultural". In *Migraciones, discursos e ideologías en una sociedad globalizada. Claves para su mejor comprensión*, ed. María Martínez Lirola, 19-43. Alicante: Instituto Alicantino de Cultura Juan Gil-Albert.
- . 2011. "Informative Treatment of Immigration and Intercultural Dynamics of Spanish Mass Media". *Media, Migration and Public Opinion: Myths and Prejudices and the Challenge of Attaining Mutual Understanding between Europe and North Africa*, ed. Ivan Ureta, 187-214. Bern, Berlin, Bruxelles, Frankfurt, New York, Oxford, Wien: Peter Lang.
- MIGRACOM. 2006. *Tratamiento informativo de la inmigración en España. Año 2006*. Dir. Nicolás Lorite García. Barcelona: MIGRACOM, Madrid: OBERAXE.



- [http://www.migracom.com/publicaciones/fichero\\_52.pdf](http://www.migracom.com/publicaciones/fichero_52.pdf) Last accessed on 31 March 2012.
- . 2007. *Tratamiento informativo de la inmigración en España. Año 2007*. Dir. Nicolás Lorite García. Barcelona: MIGRACOM, Madrid: OBERAXE.  
<http://www.oberaxe.es/files/datos/499059da8ccc5/TratamInfesp2007.pdf>  
Last accessed on 31 March 2012.
- . 2008. *Tratamiento informativo de la inmigración en España. Año 2008*. Dir. Nicolás Lorite García. Barcelona: MIGRACOM, Madrid: OBERAXE. [http://www.migracom.com/publicaciones/fichero\\_56.pdf](http://www.migracom.com/publicaciones/fichero_56.pdf)  
Last accessed on 31 March 2012.
- . 2009. *Tratamiento informativo de la inmigración en España. Año 2009*. Dir. Nicolás Lorite García. Barcelona: MIGRACOM, Madrid: OBERAXE.  
<http://www.oberaxe.es/files/datos/4c404398ba627/MIGRACOM%202009%20110610.pdf> Last accessed on 24 January 2012.
- minutodigital.com "Los inmigrantes de Salt continúan quemando coches". 17 January 2011. <http://www.minutodigital.com/2011/01/17/los-inmigrantes-de-salt-continuan-quemando-coches/> Last accessed on 31 March 2012.
- . "Sigue la batalla en Salt: detienen a un colombiano que asesinó a un joven de un golpe en la cabeza". 31 January 2011.  
<http://www.minutodigital.com/2011/03/31/sigue-la-batalla-en-salt-detienen-a-un-colombiano-que-asesino-a-un-joven-de-un-golpe-en-la-cabeza/> Last accessed on 31 March 2012.
- MUGAK Observatorio de la Diversidad. *Público*, 5 October 2011.  
<http://medios.mugak.eu/noticias/noticia/292465> Last accessed on 31 March 2012.
- Público*. "El partido xenófobo PxC cierra la campaña con un vídeo racista". 18 November 2011. <http://www.publico.es/espana/407708/el-partido-xenofobo-pxc-cierra-la-campana-con-un-video-racista-elecciones-generales-2011> Last accessed on 31 March 2012.
- Rodrigo Alsina, Miquel. 2005. *La construcción de la noticia*. Barcelona: Paidós.
- Roger, Maiol. "La crisis ahoga a los medios locales". *El País* 4 December 2011.  
[http://elpais.com/diario/2011/12/04/catalunya/1322964447\\_850215.html](http://elpais.com/diario/2011/12/04/catalunya/1322964447_850215.html)  
Last accessed on 31 March 2012.
- Sauri, Josep and Lluís F. González "Durán culpa de los altercados de Salt al "exceso de extranjeros". *El Periodico de Catalunya*. 20 January 2011. <http://es.scribd.com/doc/47245537/El-periodico-20-01-2011>

- Last accessed on 31 March 2012.
- Sendín Gutiérrez, José Carlos (coord.). 2008. *Guía práctica para los profesionales de los medios de comunicación. Tratamiento informativo de la inmigración*. Madrid: Proyecto Promoequality, OBERAXE, Secretaria de Estado de Inmigración y Emigración.  
[http://www.tt.mtas.es/periodico/inmigracion/200712/guia\\_medios.pdf](http://www.tt.mtas.es/periodico/inmigracion/200712/guia_medios.pdf)  
Last accessed on 31 March 2012.
- SOS Racisme. 2011. *Manifiesto contra el uso demagógico y populista de la inmigración ante las próximas elecciones municipales*.  
<http://eapnmelilla.wordpress.com/2011/03/29/manifiesto-contra-el-uso-demagogico-y-populista-de-la-inmigracion-ante-las-proximas-elecciones/> Last accessed on 31 March 2012.
- TV3. "Batalla campal entre comunitats a Salt" *Telenotícies vespre*, 26 August 2009. <http://www.tv3.cat/videos/1457349> Last accessed on 31 March 2012.
- Televisión de Catalunya*, 324 "Baralla multitudinària a Salt entre ciutadans pakistanesos i marroquins" 26 August 2009.  
<http://www.324.cat/noticia/401605/girones/Baralla-multitudinaria-a-Salt-entre-ciutadans-pakistanesos-i-marroquins> Last accessed on 31 March 2012.
- TotSalt.cat* "Un partit de futbol acaba en batalla campal al Camp Municipal de les Guixeres", 21 June 2011.  
[http://www.totsalt.cat/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=300:un-partit-de-futbol-acaba-en-batalla-campal-al-camp-municipal-de-les-guixeres&catid=1:sports&Itemid=19](http://www.totsalt.cat/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=300:un-partit-de-futbol-acaba-en-batalla-campal-al-camp-municipal-de-les-guixeres&catid=1:sports&Itemid=19) Last accessed on 31 March 2012.